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Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 L-03 NSC-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02

EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 STR-04 SAJ-01 OMB-01 AID-05

IO-10 SS-15 /094 W
---------- 012402
R 291619Z AUG 75
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2486
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 14163

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, KN, KS, GW
SUBJECT: FRG INTEREST IN ESTABLISHING TRADE OFFICE
WITH NORTH KOREA

REF: STATE 204074 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: FRG WANTS TO INVITE NORTH KOREA TO ESTABLISH A NON-OFFICIAL TRADE OFFICE IN BONN BECAUSE IT FEELS ITS TRADE WITH NORTH KOREA MAKES ONE DESIRABLE. IT HAS NO INTENTION OF OPENING IN PYONGANG. FRG WILL CONSIDER US COMMENTS BEFORE PROCEEDING. END SUMMARY.

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2. ON AUGUST 28 WE FOLLOWED UP DEPUTY ASSISTANT

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SECRETARY EDMUND'S MEETING WITH RUYTER DURING A MEETING WITH WEGNER OF ASIA DIVISION OF FONOFF. WE REPEATED POINTS EDMUNDS MADE TO RUYTER ALONG LINES OF REFTEL.

3. WEGNER, WHO HAD DRAFTED THE INSTRUCTIONS SENT FRG EMBASSY AT WASHINGTON, EMPHASIZED TO US THAT THE FRG'S PLANS ARE VERY CONFIDENTIAL. FEW PEOPLE EVEN IN THE FONOFF ARE AWARE OF THEM. HE SAID THAT NORTH KOREA KNOWS NOTHING OF THEM; THE INITIATIVE HAS BEEN TAKEN SOLELY BY THE FRG. WEGNER GAVE THE FOLLOWING REASONS BEHIND THE FRG PLANS:

A. FRG TRADE WITH NORTH KOREA HAS INCREASED 300 OVER THE PAST 12-15 MONTHS, WHICH IS THE LARGEST GROWTH RATE THE FRG HAS WITH ANY ASIAN OR COMMUNIST STATE. (WEGNER ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE ABSOLUTE FIGURES ARE STILL MODEST.)

B. THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 30 FRG NATIONALS ON TEMPORARY DUTY IN NORTH KOREA, MOSTLY TECHNICIANS. GERMAN INDUSTRY HAS ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH SOME FACILITY FOR TALKING DIRECTLY TO THE NORTH KOREANS IF ONE OF THESE PEOPLE HAS TROUBLE AND THERE IS A NEED FOR DIRECT, QUICK COMMUNICATION.

C. THE QUESTION OF TRADE RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITHIN THE EC. THESE DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN INCONCLUSIVE, BUT OF THE EC COUNTRIES DENMARK HAS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA AND FRANCE AND ITALY HAVE PERMITTED NORTH KOREA TO OPEN TRADE OFFICES IN THEIR CAPITALS AND ARE CURRENTLY IN THE PROCESS OF UPGRADING THE STATUS OF THESE OFFICES.

D. NORTH KOREA MAINTAINS A LARGE EMBASSY IN EAST BERLIN AND HANDLES ALL GERMAN QUESTIONS OUT OF IT.

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IO-10 SS-15 /094 W
---------- 012508
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FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2487
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USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 14163

THIS IS BOTH DISTASTEFUL AND INCONVENIENT TO THE FRG.

4. THE FRG HAS NO INTENTION OF OPENING AN OFFICE IN PYONGANG. RATHER, IT IS THINKING OF INVITING THE NORTH KOREANS TO OPEN AN OFFICE IN BONN. THIS OFFICE WOULD BE "PRIVATE" WITH NO OFFICIAL STATUS. THE FRG DOES NOT INTEND TO NEGOTIATE A TRADE AGREEMENT WITH NORTH KOREA.

5. WEGNER DID NOT MAKE A POLITICAL CASE FOR THE FRG POSITION, BUT HE DID NOTE THAT NORTH KOREA IS BECOMING MORE INVOLVED IN THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

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(MEMBERSHIP IN THE GROUP OF 77 AND NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE FOR EXAMPLE) AND THAT, THEREFORE, IT MAY PROVE USEFUL TO INCREASE ITS EXPOSURE TO THE INDUSTRIALIZED WEST. WEGNER ADDED THAT THE FRG BELIEVES THAT NORTH KOREA MADE A BASIC POLICY DECISION TWO YEARS AGO TO INCREASE ITS TRADE WITH THE INDUSTRIALIZED WEST. IT APPEARS AS IF THE FRG IS ONE OF THE CHIEF BENIFICIARIES OF THIS DECISION.

6. WEGNER TOOK CAREFUL NOTE OF THE US POSITION. (HE

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HAD NOT YET RECEIVED A REPORT FROM THE FRG EMBASSY OF RUYTER'S CONVERSATION.) HE SAID THAT THE FONOFF WOULD CONSIDER OUR RECOMMENDATION THAT THE FRG APPRISE THE SOUTH KOREANS OF ITS THINKING AND TAKE THE US COMMENTS INTO ACCOUNT IN ANY DECISION IT MAKES.

7. COMMENT: WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE FONOFF BELIEVES THAT, IF PARIS AND ROME CAN HAVE TRADE AND DENMARK DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA, THERE SHOULD BE NO OBJECTION TO THE FRG'S PLANS. WE THEREFORE EXPECT THAT THE FONOFF, MAY WELL AT LEAST ON THE WORKING LEVEL, GIVE SHORT SHRIFT TO OUR COMMENTS. HOWEVER, WE DOUBT THAT THE QUESTION HAS BEEN CONSIDERED IN DEPTH AT THE FONOFF POLICY LEVEL. WE BELIEVE THAT , IF THE DEPARTMENT WANTS TO HEAD THIS OFF, A HIGH LEVEL APPROACH WILL BE NECESSARY, EITHER HERE, IN WASHINGTON, OR IN NEW YORK DURING UN SESSIONS.

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